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Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

5                    Claim 1. (Currently amended) A filter underdrain  
assembly for controlling backwash water flow in a filtration  
system having [[from]] a backwash water inlet, said filter  
underdrain assembly comprising a plurality of panel members  
forming a grid like underdrain, each panel member having a  
10                    plurality of apertures, the cross-sectional area of said  
apertures in said panel members varying between said panel  
members, said apertures of said panel members being located  
further away from said backwash water inlet of said  
filtration system having a lesser cross-sectional area  
15                    relative to said cross-sectional area of said apertures of  
said panel members closer to said backwash water inlet of  
said filtration system.

                    Claim 2. (Previously presented) A filter  
underdrain assembly as in claim 1 wherein said apertures in  
20                    said panel members are elongate slots.

                    Claim 3. (Previously presented) A filter  
underdrain assembly as in claim 2 and further comprising an  
air passageway in said panel members.

25                    Claim 4. (Previously presented) A filter  
underdrain assembly as in claim 3 wherein said panel member  
has upper and lower surfaces, said air passageway releasing  
air below said upper surface of said panel member.

30                    Claim 5. (Previously presented) A filter  
underdrain assembly as in claim 3 wherein said air  
passageway releases air above said upper surface of said  
panel member.

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5                   Claim 6. (Previously presented) A filter underdrain assembly as in claim 3 wherein said air passageway extends below said upper surface of said panel member, said air passageway being formed from interconnected surfaces defining sides and a bottom, said sides having perforations to allow air to escape from said air passageway below said upper surface of said panel member.

10                   Claim 7. (Previously presented) A filter underdrain assembly as in claim 3 wherein said air passageway extends below said upper surface of said panel member, said air passageway being formed from interconnected surfaces defining sides and a bottom, said air passageway having perforations extending through said upper surface of said panel member.

15                   Claim 8. (Canceled)

                  Claim 9. (Canceled)

                  Claim 10. (Canceled)

                  Claim 11. (Canceled)

                  Claim 12. (Canceled)

20                   Claim 13. (Canceled)

                  Claim 14. (Canceled)

                  Claim 15. (Canceled)

                  Claim 16. (Canceled)

                  Claim 17. (Canceled)

25                   Claim 18. (Currently amended) Filter underdrain apparatus for controlling backwash water flow maldistribution in a filtration system from a backwash water

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inlet, said filter underdrain apparatus comprising a plurality of panel members assembled adjacent each other to form a grid like underdrain, each panel element having multiple punched bridges apertures in a surface thereof, each bridge aperture defining a pair of slotted water inlet/outlets and wherein the number and/or size of said punched bridges apertures are varied from panel member to panel member, said panel members furthest away from said backwash water inlet of said filtration system having a lesser number of bridges apertures or smaller slotted inlet/outlets from said panel members nearer to said backwash water inlet of said filtration system, said panel members being operable to provide a substantially equalised water flow through the underdrain assembly from said panel members.

Claim 19. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim 18 wherein said multiple punched bridges apertures are sized to substantially prevent the passage of filter media therethrough.

Claim 20. (Previously submitted) Apparatus according to claim 19 and further comprising an attachment for attaching each of said panel members to adjacent panel members for securing said panel member to said underdrain assembly.

Claim 21. (Previously submitted) Apparatus according to claim 20 and further comprising a seal for forming a substantially watertight seal between a surface of each of said panel members and said underdrain.

Claim 22. (Canceled)

Claim 23. (Canceled)

Claim 24. (Canceled)

Claim 25. (Canceled)

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Claim 26. (Currently amended) Filter underdrain assembly for controlling backwash water flow from a backwash water inlet associated with a filtration system, said filter underdrain assembly comprising a plurality of panel members forming a grid like underdrain, each panel member having a plurality of bridges apertures, the number or cross-sectional area of said bridges apertures varying between said panel members, said panel members located further away from said backwash water inlet of said filtration system having a lesser number or smaller cross-sectional area of said bridges apertures relative to those of said panel members located closer to said backwash water inlet of said filtration system, said panel members being operable to substantially equalize water flow from each of said panel members of said filter underdrain assembly.

Claim 27. (Canceled)

Claim 28. (Canceled)

Claim 29. (Canceled)

Claim 30. (Canceled)

Claim 31. (Canceled)

Claim 32. (Canceled)

Claim 33. (Canceled)

Claim 34. (Canceled)

Claim 35. (Canceled)

Claim 36. (Canceled)

Claim 37. (Canceled)

Claim 38. (Canceled)

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**Claim 39. (Canceled)**